

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
Small Group Ministry Program  
**Our Principles**  
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, OR, February 2016

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING OR SOUND A CHIME (2 to 3 minutes for this and silence and opening words)  
MOMENT OF SILENCE

**OPENING WORDS**

Each of us brings a separate truth here, we bring the truth of our own life, our own story. We don't come as empty vessels, but rather we come as full people, people who have our own story and our own truth. We seek to add to our truths and add to our stories. This room is rich with truth, rich with experience. All manner of people are here: needy, joyful, frightened, anxious, bored. We all bring our truth with us. May we all recognize the truth and the story in everyone's life. And may we hear and honor the truths that we all bring as we gather together. Together we have truths. Together we have a story. Together we are a community."

-Rev. Penny Hackett-Evans, Unitarian Universalist Community Minister

CHECK-IN (up to 20 to 30 minutes total with up to 2 to 3 minutes per person)

TOPIC AND SHARING (up to 70 minutes for readings, questions and requests, a few minutes for reflection and making notes if desired, individual sharing, optional open discussion at the end if the group agrees, with an optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

**READINGS**

The Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association that the member congregations covenant to affirm and promote.

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

At the descriptive level, certainly, you would expect different cultures to develop different sorts of ethics and obviously they have; that doesn't mean that you can't think of overarching ethical principles you would want people to follow in all kinds of places.

-Peter Singer, Australian moral philosopher

There are ultimately only two possible adjustments to life: one is to suit our lives to principles; the other is to suit principles to our lives. If we do not live as we think, we soon begin to think as we live.

-Fulton J. Sheen, American Catholic bishop

Nature is at work. Character and destiny are her handiwork. She gives us love and hate, jealousy and reverence. All that is ours is the power to choose which impulse we shall follow.

-David Seabury, American psychologist

QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS (Please respond to any of the questions, requests, and readings you feel moved by. It is not necessary to respond to all of them.)

1. Which of the UU Principles particularly resonate with you?
2. What other principles or values are important to you?
3. Share about times when it has been challenging to follow principles or values that are important to you.

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available, with optional open discussion at the end after all have shared)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (up to 5-10 minutes). Alternatively, this agenda item can be done after the check-in, if the group decides to do that.

- Confirm next meeting date, time, location, and topic.
- Consider discussing the service project.
- Other

LIKES (celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met) and WISHES (mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)/CHECK-OUT (a few words or phrases from each person who wants to share, up to 5 minutes total)

CLOSING WORDS (2 minutes for words, and closing)

Our time in this place may have ended, but our connection to each other and this community remains. Together may we walk the path of justice, speak words of love, live the selfless deed, tread gently upon the earth, and fill the world with compassion.

-Rev. Kathy A. Huff, Unitarian Universalist minister

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE OR SOUND A CHIME (and additional optional closing ritual if agreed to)

(Preparation for the facilitator. Please bring: the SGM Facilitator Training Manual binder; paper and writing implements; the session plan; a candle or chime; a timekeeping device; and your calendar/date book.)

Session plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry steering committee 2015-2016 (Bonnie Koenig; Dick Loescher, chair; Connie Newman).

November 23, 2015